

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. An identifier indicating the status of each claim is provided.

Listing of Claims

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) An information providing apparatus for providing a desired information screen by making selection from icons respectively assigned to information screens, wherein

the desired information screen comprises means for displaying a menu of recommended channels selected based on high past frequencies of selection, means for displaying a menu of categories containing programs classified into said categories based on program information, and means for displaying a menu of media representing contents of a plurality of recording/reproducing media comprising DVD, HDD, and CD,

the icons are group icons respectively assigned to groups each grouping a plurality of information screens,

when a plurality of icons are displayed on a screen, a frame-like mark being at the center of the screen and having arrows indicating direction in which an operation key can be operated is displayed on a presently focused icon before a selection of an icon is made,

the information providing apparatus comprises operation information input means inputted with operation information based on selection operation, and switching means for switching a menu screen in an upper layer on which the group icons are arranged, to a first menu screen in a layer lower than a selected group icon, with a predetermined first transit screen inserted therebetween,

the operation information entails operation keys, which are simultaneously operated,

the switching means gradually enlarges the selected group icon on the first transit screen, to zoom in onto the group icon, and gradually fades display of the selected icon onto which the display is zooming in, on the transit screen, to switch the display to display of the first menu screen in the lower layer,

the position and size of the frame-like mark are kept fixed during enlarging of the selected icon, and

the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in an upper portion of each screen.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the group icon in the lower layer has a second menu screen in a lower layer, on which group icons are further arranged, and

the switching means switches the first menu screen in the lower layer on which the group icons are arranged, to the second menu screen in the lower layer of the selected group icon, with a predetermined second transit screen inserted therebetween, in response to the operation information, gradually enlarges the selected group icon on the transit screen to zoom in on the group icon, and gradually fades display of the group icon onto which the display is zooming in, on the second transit screen, to switch the display to display of the second menu screen in the lower layer.

6-10. (Canceled)

11. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the group icon in the upper layer has a second menu screen in an upper layer, on which group icons are further arranged, and

the switching means switches the first menu screen in the upper layer, on which the group icons are arranged, to the second menu screen in the upper layer of a selected group icon, with a predetermined second transit screen inserted therebetween, in response to the operation information, gradually minimizes the selected group icon on the transit screen to zoom out from the group icon, and gradually fades display of the first menu screen to switch the first menu screen to a corresponding second menu screen.

12-23. (Canceled)

24. (Previously Presented) An information providing method for providing a desired information screen by making selection from icons assigned to information screens, wherein:

the desired information screen comprises means for displaying a menu of recommended channels selected based on high past frequencies of selection, means for displaying a menu of categories containing programs classified into said categories based on program information, and means for displaying a menu of media representing contents of a plurality of recording/reproducing media comprising DVD, HDD, and CD,

the icons are group icons respectively assigned to groups each grouping a plurality of information screens,

the information providing method comprises an operation information input step of being inputted with operation information based on selection operation, and a switching step of switching a menu screen in an upper layer on which the group icons are arranged, to a first menu screen in a lower layer of a selected group icon, with a predetermined first transit screen inserted therebetween,

the operation information entails operation keys, which are simultaneously operated,

when a plurality of icons are displayed on a screen, a frame-like mark being at the center of the screen and having arrows indicating direction in which an operation key can be operated is displayed on a presently focused icon before a selection of an icon is made,

in the switching step, the selected group icon is gradually enlarged on the first transit screen, to zoom in onto the group icon, and display of the selected icon onto which the

display is zooming in is gradually faded on the transit screen, to switch the display to display of the first menu screen in the lower layer,

the position and size of the frame-like mark are kept fixed during enlarging of the selected icon, and

the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in an upper portion of each screen.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 24, wherein the group icon in the lower layer has a second menu screen in a lower layer, on which icons are further arranged, and

in the switching step, the first menu screen in the lower layer on which the group icons are arranged, is switched to the second menu screen in the lower layer of the selected group icon, with a predetermined second transit screen inserted therebetween, in response to the operation information, and the selected group icon on the transit screen is gradually enlarged to zoom in on the group icon, and display of the group icon onto which the display is zooming in is gradually faded on the second transit screen, to switch the display to display of the second menu screen in the lower layer.

27-31. (Cancelled)

32. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 24, wherein the group icon in the upper layer has a second menu screen in an upper layer, on which group icons are further arranged, and

in the switching step, the first menu screen in the upper layer, on which the group icons are arranged, is gradually switched to the second menu screen in the upper layer of a selected group icon, with a predetermined second transit screen inserted therebetween, in response to the operation information, the selected group icon is gradually minimized on the transit screen, to zoom out from the group icon, and display of the first menu screen is gradually faded to switch display from the first menu screen to a corresponding second menu screen.

33-42. (Canceled)